

ourselves what the debate is about here. It seems to me there is too much confusion with respect to whether or not this debate is about cutting taxes, leaving money in the coffers of the Federal Government as opposed to the hands of the American people who earned it in the first place, and whether or not it is fair and correct to deny this poor, beleaguered, suffering government more of our tax revenues.

Mr. Speaker, that is not what this debate is about. This debate is about whether or not this Government of the United States will exercise its responsibility to do everything it can to help unemployed American workers get back to work. It is about jobs. It is about opportunity. It is about a chance to stay on the job, get a promotion on the job, get a job in a thriving, growing economy; a thriving, growing economy that has been serving the American people well, and one that got locked into a bit of a cock hat first by the misguided, ill-advised case against the Microsoft company earlier last year that compressed the equity markets to the point of economic downturn, and then secondly by the attack on America on September 11.

What are we to do about that? Sit back, call upon the Federal Reserve to do all they can, and we do nothing? Or are we to join the effort to try to put America back to work?

Twice already we have tried to put an economic stimulus package through this body to the other body and to the President that is designed for the purpose of putting people back to work. Twice now, despite the fact that a majority of the Members of the other body were ready to vote to approve that package, it was stopped. That is a shame.

Finally, after having done nothing, the other body sends us a paltry, paltry, stingy, shortsighted, self-serving, insensitive 13 weeks unemployment compensation extension and then has the audacity to applaud themselves for their generosity.

Mr. Speaker, does this great government, with all its resources, all its resourcefulness, all its keen minds, we have nothing to offer an unemployed American worker except more weeks of unemployment? If that is the least we can do, let us at least be humble about it. Let us not brag about it. Let us not strut and pretend we have done something good here.

Let us understand, we failed my colleagues and Mr. and Mrs. American worker; if all we had to offer was more weeks to stay unemployed, we failed them. We do not deserve applause. We certainly do not deserve appreciation.

This House of Representatives cannot do only the least we can do for people out of a job in America. We are committing to doing the best we can do, and the best we can do is to cut taxes in a smart way to allow incentives for investment and growth in employment and jobs and opportunity. Again, for the third time, we tried to do that pol-

icy which was proven to us to be a policy that works time after time after time.

Very simple question, do my colleagues want to stand up with pride and say, Mr. and Mrs. America, we tried to put you back to work, or do my colleagues want to really go home and say, we just decided to take care of our politics in Washington, and we were content for workers to stay unemployed for another 13 weeks, and we had nothing else to offer?

Shame on us if that is all we can do. Shame on us if we have nothing in our hearts for people out of a job in America except stay out of a job for a little bit longer so that we can continue to have the money of those people who are fortunate to stay working. Shame on us if we fail them.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would again remind all Members to refrain from urging action by the Senate or characterizing Senate action or inaction.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KLECZKA).

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), in his opening remarks said the reason we need this bill comes with a very easy explanation. In fact, it is one word called jobs.

I will give my colleagues an easier explanation as to why we need this bill, but it is two words. It is called campaign contributions. Last year we already passed an economic stimulus bill. It totaled \$1.3 trillion in tax cuts, and many of us argued that that is too much, the surplus that we thought would be there might not materialize, and lo and behold it has not. So compliments of the party of fiscal discipline, this Federal Government is now in a deficit.

After we passed this massive tax break, the bulk of which folks are not going to get, we passed a \$15 billion bailout for the airlines, and we were told at that time by the Speaker and the minority leader the next bill or very shortly we are going to take care of the unemployed workers. That was months ago.

Then the House brought up a bill to bail out the insurance industry. Again, nothing done for the unemployed worker.

Today, we have an opportunity to finally take care of the unemployed worker. Pending before the House is a clean, simple Senate-passed bill that provides a 13-week extension for the unemployed worker, but the majority leader says we do more because that worker needs a job. That worker needs an extension because he wants his old job back, whether he or she has the seniority or he or she has a 401 or retirement program.

We can do today what we have not done for months. We can pass this bill and have it to the President this after-

noon by passing the Senate bill. Why must we do it today? Because today Congress goes on vacation. We are going on vacation for a week, and as Members are going to be scurrying off to Andrews Air Force Base to board those beautiful Air Force jets that workers paid for, taking them to exotic places, the workers of this country get nothing, the unemployed workers get nothing.

Mr. Speaker, today we can send this valentine to the unemployed workers of America, and we are going to sign it, regards, the people's House.

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Not the "Special Interest House," not the "Business Only House," this is for the unemployed workers from the "People's House." That is what we can do today.

But my Republican colleagues are saying, okay, we will give this to the unemployed workers, but we have to give this valentine to our corporate business friends. Signed, Love, the Republicans.

Mr. Speaker let us not blackmail the unemployed workers of America.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

I know the gentleman has his speaking points that have been passed out, and he is trying to stay on them; but I really wish he would realize that this House, back in December, passed trade adjustment authority, which had a provision for workers who lost their jobs because of September 11. It is the Senate that has failed to deliver on providing help for those who, through no fault of their own, lost their jobs.

It is a fact. I know the gentleman does not like it, but it is true.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KLECZKA), for a grand total of 4 minutes.

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, it is also true that last October we passed a "stimulus" bill, a bill which repealed the alternative minimum tax for businesses, but made it retroactive to 1986, giving IBM one check for \$1.4 billion, GM a check for \$850 million, and Enron \$250 million.

And my colleague wonders why the Senate did not pass his bill? The gentleman poisoned the well with that type of nonsense.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER).

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to make two points, I think.

In business, when I was in business at home, if we could agree on some future course of action, we set that aside and went ahead with it; and those matters that we could not agree on what was best for our employees and ourselves we would discuss further.

I think the facts are pretty simple here. We all say we agree on unemployment benefits, so why do we not go ahead and do that? That is what reasonable people would do, I think, in